



The Philatelic Communicator

Writers Unit No. 30

of the

American Philatelic Society

ISSN 0147-3646

Third Quarter, 1988 — Volume 21, Number 3, Whole Number 81.

No Editor's Sermon This Time!

After my "blast" in the last *PC*, I was gratified to find two excellent articles in my mail box. They comprise the bulk of this issue, along with a few news items, a round-up of feedback to my various queries and complaints, and a Bill Welch presentation on screened prints (plus whatever Joe and Bob contribute).

Admittedly this does not make a fat issue, but it does keep us reasonably on schedule. My personal input in the usual reviews will have to await the 4th Quarter issue. By then, the Congress Book will be nearly finished and I'll have more free time. Meanwhile, please keep responding; the more contributions from a variety of writers, the better the *PC*.

Barbara R. Mueller

Writers Unit Breakfast Sunday, August 28th 1988

at COBO Hall, 1 Washington Blvd., Detroit, MI

Dignity and Mirth and Meeting. That's what's promised at the Writers Unit Breakfast scheduled for Sunday, August 28th, 1988, at 8:30 a.m. Tickets are \$12.50 per person and reservations should be made at once with APS Central Office (817) 237-3803. Seating is limited at this very exciting affair.

[See page 43, column 2, this issue for details.]

— Dignity. Philatelic writers are at the essence of telling the hobby's story. The annual Literature Awards will be presented to writers for their efforts of the past year. Awards in all categories of writing will be presented, based on a nationally-accredited judging panel's decisions.

— Mirth. Philatelic writers are at the essence of the hobby's _____ (reader: you fill in the blank). This is the time of year when some opportunities arise for poking some fun at ourselves, others, and the hobby in general. All in the height of Dignity.

— Meeting. It's going to be grand! If you want in on the fun call Steve Rod (201) 763-3843 before Aug. 15.

Philatelic Literature Review

Vol. 37, No. 2: 2nd Quarter 1988

The American Philatelic Research Library's quarterly journal has arrived this morning (July 28, 1988) in its over 100-page package of philabookwormia. A few words might tip some of you readers not members of the APRL — and thus perhaps not regularly seeing this estimable work — toward participation.

One of the fascinating coverages of a recent philatelic literature sale, here 'The William L. Green Sale', by William Hagan, brings excellent and interesting data on some of the highlights of this formidable offering (the sale dates were March 26-27, 1988) of over 975 'lots' of literature of our hobby.

Mr. Hagan estimates that over half the lots sold for under \$50. Several went well into the thousands.

Much, much more news and information, from the quickly-obsolescent to the archival, appears in this issue of the APRL opus.

Subscription (membership) is available in stages:

PLR Subscriber	\$ 10.00
PLR Sustaining	\$ 15.00
PLR Contributing	\$ 30.00
PLR Life	\$ 200.00

Library Patron (Life sub.) \$ 1,000.00

APRL, Box 8338, State College, PA 16803.

I highly recommend membership and the journal.

Joe F. Frye

IN THIS ISSUE

Breakfast at STaMpsHOW 88 (Detroit, MI, Aug. 28, 1988)	33, 43
Computer publications	40, 41
Computer-Assisted Publishing & Photographic Advice (article)	35
Feedback (response to last issue)	41
Half-tone Screens (article)	40
Last In (just-before lockup of the issue for the printer)	34
Literature Events — Upcoming	39
Literature Events — Past; report of COPO Award, etc.	37, 39
President's Message	41
Secretary-Treasurer's Report	43
That Profound Silence (article)	44
Vox Pop (article)	38

Quarterly journal of the Writers Unit No. 30 of the American Philatelic Society, 2501 Drexel St., Vienna, VA 22180. *The Philatelic Communicator* is produced and mailed as a paid service for Writers Unit 30 by Midland Co., Box 22308, Memphis, TN 38122-0308.

Membership in Writers Unit No. 30 is open to anyone interested in philatelic communication, subject to approval of application submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer at address below on form available from him for addressed, stamped no. 10 envelope, and payment of dues as noted.

Membership in the American Philatelic Society, while encouraged, is not required as a condition of joining or maintaining membership in Writers Unit 30.

Dues are payable in advance, on a calendar year basis, in U.S. funds, payable net in U.S. dollars through a U.S. bank or the U.S. Postal Service, and include all issues of this journal for such calendar year. Refund, pro-rata, of payment to the Writers Unit No. 30 of dues tendered shall constitute final and satisfactory settlement of any dispute which may arise involving membership and/or dues payments.

Advertising for this journal will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and details should be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer for his handling.

All matters involving Writers Unit 30 business
EXCEPT editorial matter for this publication
must be sent to the Secretary-Treasurer.

Editorial matter should be sent to the Editor.

OFFICERS OF WRITERS UNIT 30—a non-profit corporation:

Robert de Violini President
P.O. Box 5025, Oxnard, CA 93031 (805) 983-4741
John T. Nugent Vice-President, East
15 High School Avenue, Meriden, CT 06450
Tom Current Vice-President, West
P.O. Box 4586, Portland, OR 97208
George B. Griffenhagen Secretary-Treasurer
2501 Drexel St., Vienna, VA 22180 (703) 560-2413
Barbara R. Mueller Editor
225 S. Fischer St., Jefferson, WI 53549 (414) 674-5239

COUNCIL

Ernst M. Cohn John E. Foxworth, Jr.
Diana Manchester George M. Martin
Randolph L. Neil Steven J. Rod
William L. Welch Joe F. Frye (Chairman)

The Executive Committee is composed of the
Officers, Editor, and Chairman of the Council.

Calendar Year Dues — Writers Unit 30, APS:

U.S. Zip code addresses \$ 10.00
Canada or Mexico addresses . . \$ 12.50
ALL OTHER addresses \$ 17.00

Dues are payable in advance, on or before Dec. 31 of the applicable calendar year, and membership terminates March 31 of any year for which dues unpaid.

"Cockrill Series Handbooks — Latest Publications 1986 — 1988" From the author/publisher, Philip Cockrill, Hampstead Norreys, Newbury, Berkshire, RG16 OTT (England). Specialized handbooks on: Liberia, Netherlands & Colonies, Ethiopia, and a wide range of other countries and specialized subjects are offered and priced (pounds sterling) in this 3-page listing received July 15, 1988.

"Thirteen Stock Catalog Philatelic Literature" Leonard H. Hartmann, P.O. Box 36006, Louisville, KY 40233. Received June 4, 1988, over ninety pages 5x8½ with illustrations, offers net-priced items of philatelic literature of the world from ancient to just-off-the-press. A quick glance shows no 'asking price' but surely this item cost four or five dollars to produce even in large quantities, so unless you're reasonably expecting to buy something, it might be thoughtful to enclose a note of willingness to either return a loaned copy or pay a fee to keep it. This is the largest and most scholarly offer of our special interest known to me as a fairly regular production, the last such being distributed in February 1987 about the time I left the hospital replumbed.

"Unsticky Stickum" *The Commercial Appeal*, our Memphis and Mid-South's only major newspaper, ran a fairly lengthy article by their staff reporter, Jill Johnson Piper, in their July 28, 1988, edition, dealing with stamp gum. It notes that a Columbus, OH firm has been awarded a \$700,000 contract for a 10-month study to identify the most effective adhesive money can buy. This action, by the United States Postal Service, starts July 28, 1988, with a meeting of about 100 adhesive maker and philatelic society representatives at the firm in Ohio for a daylong conference "on stickum", the article continues.

"Do You Have a Book On . . . ?" One of the most frequently asked questions by those who call me (and are not actually collectors of anything, as a rule). Stamps, old letters, post cards, baseball cards, or whatever. They all want to do their own brain surgery. Or do they have a real desire to begin a hobby? I doubt it. Songs of Some profit Seems to motivate most curious of this kind.

Computer Assisted Publishing and Photographic Advice

by Steven S. Weston

Recently, I've read a great number of articles about philatelic publishing and photography. Most of these were "how to" or advisory in nature. As the rookie editor of *Tell*, the journal of the American Helvetia Philatelic Society, I thought that my experiences might be of value.

Since my background, training, and profession greatly influence the way I put out a bimonthly journal, I had best give some description of these factors. About twenty years ago, I worked at a typesetting and layout company where I made PMTs (photo-mechanical transfers) and half-tones, headlines (phototypesetter), and did paste-up for books and flyers.

I also operated as an independent commercial photographer specializing in advertising and product photography — everything from hamburgers to fashion. I also made photographs for personal enjoyment which included macro-photography, or photos of small objects.

Years later, I started another company which publishes computer software for banks and related financial institutions. Computer programs need a printed manual to guide the user through the processing steps of the program. We produce our manual masters with a microcomputer, word processing software, and a laser printer.

When I volunteered to be editor of *Tell*, I had no illusions that it would be easy. *Tell* is published six times a year and runs about 40 pages in each number. Previously, *Tell* was produced using typewritten pages which were reduced to fit our 5½" by 8½" format. Often, typewritten articles were used as submitted, sparing the editor of the task of retyping. This resulted in a choppy appearance because of differences in author styles, typewriters, etc. Also, the reduction process produced small type sizes which were hard to read.

I had several objectives when I became editor: improve readability and appearance, define a coherent style and appearance, increase reader and contributor activity, and improve the value of the journal as perceived by the membership. It's my belief that producing a journal with a professional appearance will achieve these goals.

I can recommend my methods as worthy of consideration by any editor with one proviso: it's not inexpensive. To begin, the equipment and software cost is

about \$5,000. This includes a personal computer (IBM compatible) with a hard disk, a laser printer (Hewlett Packard) with a book type font cartridge, and word processing software (WordPerfect). This may exceed the budget of most societies, but it's increasingly likely that members may have access to these tools.

The laser printer is critical to this operation. Its output can be used directly as a master for the printing process. A laser printer forms type characters out of tiny dots, about 300 dots per inch. The dots can barely be seen with the naked eye on the master but usually disappear on the printed copy. Only actual typesetting is better in appearance. Laser output can be waxed, pasted-up on boards and sent directly to the printer who can make print forms at 100% of the original size. Direct xerographic or flexographic reproduction is also possible.

Hewlett Packard produces dozens of fonts that can be used with their printer. I am currently using their "F" font which provides the following proportionally spaced type fonts: a Times Roman medium 8 and 10-pt., bold 10 pt., and italic 10 pt., plus a Helvetica bold 14.4 pt.

[This is Aldine Roman medium 10-pt.

This is Aldine Roman italic 10 pt.

This is Aldine Roman bold 10 pt.

This is Press Roman medium 8 pt.

The author's article contains an example of the four Times Roman faces plus one of his Helvetica bold 14.4 pt., but it can't be used here without a problem in delaying distribution of this issue. I have used my own IBM faces above to show the height of the 8 and 10 pt., and the face you are now reading is 12 pt. in height. Joe Frye.]

Other fonts are available which provide different type faces, sizes, special characters, etc. I chose the "F" font because it's readable and provides the special European characters needed in our journal for French and German text.

The printer is also capable of printing line art graphics which can be purchased as "clipper-like" packages or created using paint and draw software. It should also be noted that there are devices which allow the computer to scan and capture images much like a camera. These images can then be manipulated by the computer and then printed on the laser printer. As the cost of making PMTs and screens goes up, and the cost of scanning equipment goes down, this imaging capability becomes more attractive.

Choosing a word processing program is largely a

(Continued on page 36.)

matter of preference. Many top-of-the-line packages have the features needed to produce a respectable publication with minimum effort. I use WordPerfect 5.0 but I can also recommend Microsoft Word, WordStar 2000, and XyWrite. There are also "desktop publishing" packages such as Aldus PageMaker and Ventura Publisher which, I believe, are too complicated, are hard to use, and require more expensive laser printers (postscript capable) to be used effectively.

At a minimum, a word processing program should provide the following high-end features: mixed type sizes and styles within a line, support for the laser printer and the font cartridge you want to use, variable line width and page length, footers for automatic page numbers, foreign characters for other languages, automatic leading when mixing different point sizes, spell-checking, and automatic text-wrapping around windows for illustrations.

A computer spelling checker will catch many mistakes but cannot be relied upon entirely. For example, mine accepts both "weird" and "wierd" and none can help you with "their", "they're", and "there". Proof-reading is still required if you want to avoid little notes from your readers.

If you're lucky, you may even be able to get contributors to submit their material to you on computer diskettes. This certainly saves a great deal of typing. Most word-processors will accept input in various formats and nearly all will accept what is called ASCII text.

With all this computer power at your disposal, it's easy to forget that style and appearance are just as important. I've read articles in various computer magazines recently which advise that you should not get too fancy with all of the fonts and type sizes available. As examples, they showed some really horrible looking newsletters. It's best to keep it simple and neat in appearance, otherwise the message gets lost in the medium.

Every editor should have a style book. The best place to start is to buy a copy of *The Chicago Manual of Style* which will answer most questions about usage, structure and design. But, even this bible needs to be supplemented with your own personal preferences and needs. For example, do you prefer Zürich or Zurich?

The benefits of computerizing will astound you. After nearly a year of issues under my belt, I'm still getting kudos from our members and officers. Best of all, article submissions are more numerous and of greater length and interest. I can only surmise that authors

were encouraged to write so that their work could be shown to its best advantage. And the topper, the best result of all, is that we are attracting more new members and retaining more existing members despite the fact that we had a dues increase to cover postal costs. This success has led to more paid advertising and increased participation at our shows. All this proves that a journal is the lifeblood of a society.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographing stamps and covers is quite easy with the right equipment. First, the camera should be a single lens reflex (SLR) type which avoids the problems of focusing and framing the subject. Either a 35mm or 2¼" format will do well; the latter will provide better images at greater cost. Use black & white negative film if you're shooting for monochrome illustrations and color transparency (slide) film for color (which can also be used for club slide shows). Remember that slower film speeds result in better images but require more lighting.

Your objective is to get the largest possible image of your subject on the film. This means that you need macro-photography devices which will allow you to get the camera close to the subject so that it fills the frame of view and the film image area. Closeup lenses work but produce fuzzy images. Instead, use macro-rings or a bellows attachment. Using either of these with your "normal" lens (50mm with a 35mm camera) will mean that the front of your lens will be very close to the subject, perhaps too close for proper illumination and comfort (lights are hot). The solution is to use a longer lens (100 to 135mm for a 35mm camera). You should also consider using a lens designed for macro-photography.

Lighting is critical for good pictures. Forget about daylight; it's too variable and impossible to move! Use photofloods, or better, small electronic flash units, one on each side to provide balanced and even illumination.

Use a tripod, copy stand, or build a device which allows you to move the subject to and from the camera. Under these conditions, your camera will have a very shallow depth of field, sometimes less than the thickness of a stamp. The stamp or cover must be flat; use thin glass if you must press the object flat. The axis line through the lens to the film must be perpendicular to the flat axis of the stamp; slightly oblique lines of sight will result in poor focus.

Proper support and rigidity is crucial to maintaining sharp focus and a sharp image. Use a cable release and lock up the mirror, if you can, to avoid vibrations.

(Continued on page 37.)

Using an electronic flash will help create a sharp image. Creating and maintaining a sharp image is the most critical part of the process.

If you're using B&W film, you should consider using filters to enhance the results. Film does not "see" as well as people do. Filters can lighten or eliminate unwanted detail; use a filter nearly the same color as the color you wish to de-emphasize. To emphasize a color over other colors, use a filter of a complementary color (i.e., to emphasize and darken light green, use a red or orange filter). After adding or removing filters, be sure to check your focus because the filter glass will have an effect at these distances. Also, filters will affect your exposure time.

Keep a log of your setup, exposure and other factors. Make several shots, varying your exposure and setup. Remember to vary only one thing at a time so that when you view your results and compare them to your log, you'll know which setup yields the best results. The next time you do a shoot, things will go like clockwork.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN PRINT

Producing illustrations in print may require some advance preparation depending upon the subject. The printing process is an all or nothing situation, either ink is applied to the paper or it isn't. Most stamp collectors are fairly familiar with the printing process, so I won't describe that here. What I would like to say is that line-art, such as engraved stamps, can be illustrated using xerographic (photocopier) copies. This has the virtue of being a very inexpensive way to "photograph", enlarge, or reduce stamps and covers. The drawbacks are some loss of detail, "fly specks", and the inability to handle some colors. You cannot use filters on a photocopier to enhance colors.

When detail must be preserved, or colors cause a muddy photocopy, or the subject is not line-art, you will need to have a half-tone PMT made. A half-tone converts the gradations of light and dark in the subject to gradations of dots of various sizes which give the same impression to the viewer. When you order a half-tone, the technician will need to know the screen size, or the number of dots per inch to use. A 133-line screen preserves incredible detail but can cause muddy-looking pictures when printed; a fine screen like this needs the best paper and printing to work well. An 80- or 90-line screen may be your best choice. Your printer can advise you about his preference for use with your paper choice.

A color original, be it a photograph or the actual item, will never reproduce perfectly on a photocopier or PMT. That's because these "cameras" are blind to blue colors and very sensitive to red colors; blue will be white and pink will be black. In cases like this, you need to use regular B&W photographic film because it has been designed to "see" all colors. The negative or print produced can then be made into a PMT or screened.

I paste up my illustrations directly onto my boards; they look exactly like the printed results. There are other ways to include illustrations but they take more time, cost more, and are usually not required considering the quality.

If you have the budget for four-color illustrations, you're probably not reading this. This is an expensive and time-consuming process. Although I have not done so, spot-color can be used to great effect at little extra cost. Basically, this can provide you with a one-color illustration which will stand out. Adding additional spot-colors can give a very rich appearance to your covers with minimal additional cost.

Even though I've had a lot of experience in some of the aspects of publishing a journal, I'm certainly no expert. Each issue brings new challenges, new solutions, and new failures. It can be, and has been, a fun and enjoyable adjunct to my philatelic hobby. I hope to enjoy it for a long time and that you too will have a rewarding experience. *Steven S. Weston.*

PC at Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Literature Fair

The 12th annual Philatelic Literature Fair of the Cardinal Spellman Philatelic Museum in the Boston area was held in April of this year. At the request of the organizers we submitted a selection of the PC and were pleased to receive a silver award. This Fair, over a period of two days, makes available a broad spectrum of philatelic literature in an effort to acquaint collectors with what has been and is being produced in their special interest areas. To that end it also gives out a list of the publications on display with information about their origins, costs, and sources of supply. This year's 8½ x 11 mimeographed list ran to 22 pages. The CSPM has been implementing many of the ideas Bob de Vio-
lini expressed in the last issue to "enhance literature awareness" and de-emphasize competitiveness.

Watch this publication for announcements to place your publication on display and/or compete.

by Duane Koenig

To what page do you open when *Linn's* or *Stamp Collector* comes in? I look first at the letters from readers, voice of the people, *vox populi*. Both papers feature an equitable selection of collectors' opinions. *Stamps* under the old dispensation (format) usually had two epistles or at times just one long one. Mock-up for its new look promises five. *Mekeel's* does not even try. Zed there. The only reason I have subscribed to that sheet until now is for old-time dealer Justin L. Bacharach's insider column, "Sees All".

Among the monthlies, *The American Philatelist* goes to the other extreme. It prints too many correspondents: 24 in June 1988. I suppose if you are a member of the APS the admirable editor Bill Welch has to let you have your say unabridged in your journal. There I find an oversupply of quibbles concerning things frequently far removed from stamp saving.

I contribute a *billet-doux* then and now to an editor, knowing the shorter it is the sooner published. Toss your die and run! The other day I wrote Michael Laurence of *Linn's*. I contrasted the enthusiasm of a collector for the Transportation coils who called them "winners" to public apathy. A non-appreciative business woman expected on her office stamps at least a flag. She complained she got instead, "A dismal brown thing with a bakery wagon. It looks like a broken-down hearse. Who needs that on postage?" She evidently preferred Founding Fathers to dog sleds for stamp designs.

My thesis is that hobby editors who entertain comments from their subscribers should hew to certain guidelines if they want to keep me and other philatelists turning at outset to their correspondence columns. As in the *New York Times* or *Wall Street Journal*, communications should be syncopated and truncated to the kernel of the topic, in short, cut down to size and abbreviated as required. Incidentally, this permits more assorted opinions.

Subjects I like treated are: (1) news, (2) information, (3) help wanted, and (4) United States Postal Service monitoring. I am delighted to hear a collector has found an imperforate pane of the 2¢ carmine rose 1930 Von Steuben or received a missive freighted at the current first class rate with a 24¢ Jenny invert and a 1¢ Omnibus 1988. If the clipper *Lucky Strike* cleared Sag Harbor for Hong Kong in 1847 with cargo and ballast of ice and marble plus a pouch with U.S. nos. 1 and 2 on mail, if it made port after 99 days around the Horn, I

am glad for columnist and prize-winner Theron Wierenga in *Stamps* to tell all. I am dying to get such facts.

Requests for help in identifying a philatelic oddity or quiddity animate me. Sometimes I know the answer when others do not, if it is a matter of history or literature being required in the determination. Collectors are the sole people who keep surveillance on a regular basis over the USPS. When its outrages become too great, newspapers will report abuses of general interest to shippers, but day-to-day, it is the philatelist, grouching to his favorite stamp journal, who helps keep up to mark those gentry. No other opinion bloc has our peculiar concern.

What give me the bow-wows are specific types of epistles that appear with the regularity of those medical warnings that nothing is good for us anymore. To start are the people who fuss that this country or another utters too many adhesives, hence the respondents are quitting stamps. That 12-page issue from 1895 of *Mekeel's* I analyzed in *Stamps*, March 28, 1987, (*Mekeel's* in the Naughty Nineties"), had letters like this. Pray tell editors to limit such effusions to a line-o-type.

While I view with distaste the chap who knows one and only one historical fact — usually far removed from philately — and writes in to belabor the author of a clever detailed article the respondent is incapable of doing, I comprehend his feeling. I noticed a stamp writer claiming Spain had never during the American Revolution declared war on Great Britain. Madrid did, as I recalled, in June of 1780. Instead of vexing the vox pop columns, I dropped the author a postal, warning him to be ready if somebody teased him in print about his mistake.

As a professional historian I observed a couple score or less trifling errors of accepted fact in Ken Wood's exhaustive three volume encyclopedia *This is Philately*. I did not jot them down. Should he go into a new revised edition, should he say pretty please, I would reread this compendium of stamp knowledge, to give him my gloss of the same. But his work would not fail without it.

Stamps represent a hobby. A lawyer-artist from West Virginia, Wm. Roy Rice, who frequently illustrates my articles and his own with delectable hand-painted FDC's, condoned, "Stamps have given me a lot of pleasure and demand very little in return." I like his quote and often mention it. Boring letters moaning that this or that collector sold his album for only 10% of catalog (probably none of his specimens listed at over \$10), hates

(Continued on page 39.)

philately and will not recommend stamps to his children, depress me.

Buy right if you want to eat your cake and have it too. I made a small collection of the 14 Confederate States general issues, enjoyed them for a couple years, then sold the lot for what I had invested. Bear in mind, you buy stamps from a dealer at retail and sell back to him at wholesale. I got even so enough money to spend the summer in Malta. I had pleasure in selecting the Confederates and pleasure in my Valletta holiday.

Milton Waldman, who back in 1925 did a book titled *Americana: the Literature of American History*, put out by Henry Holt and Company, said in the foreword, pp. viii-ix, "A Shakespeare first folio, bought in 1623 for perhaps ten dollars, might bring \$30,000 today if in first class condition. But that same ten dollars, if invested at five percent and interest compounded, would now be worth over \$300,000,000." Keep a distinction between money mart profits and philatelic enjoyment. No more letters too, please, on buying current FDC's on fancy envelopes for \$5 each and later being offered a dime apiece by some dealer.

Personal attacks on writers and their competence should be outlawed. I saw more of that in the 1895 copy of *Mekeel's* I mentioned than I find now. In 37 years of doing philatelic pieces, once or twice I have been corrected for obvious lapses. I appreciated the help; I did not want to repeat my mistakes.

One time I did write a harmless essay, as much to praise my late father's beautiful copperplate handwriting as to inform the world of some philatelic novelty. I was shocked at a gratuitous and virulent attack on it by a knave described to me as a stamp auction customers' man. I replied to set the record straight; however, my heart was not in it. I never sent anything to that publication again. I hope that wretched fellow's mail all arrives with killer cancellations.

To sum my thoughts: I adore hearing from the man in the street. The philatelic periodicals should print germane communications, edited to fit space and taste. On the table at the Washington Conference for naval arms and Far Eastern problems in 1921-1922 was Yap, an island group serving as cable relay station in the ex-German Carolines. Somebody wrote a commentary headed, "Yap for Yappers". I would not exile that far away cranky collectors contributing letters to stamp papers.

Duane Koenig

1988 MIDAPHIL Journalism Competition

For the fifth consecutive year, philatelic journalists have an opportunity to compete for national recognition and awards in the Collectors Club of Kansas City's contest for writers who actively contribute to periodicals.

Recipients of the gold medal in this event staged under American Philatelic Society regulations will be accorded the 1988 "CCKC National Prize in Philatelic Journalism". Appropriate awards in the other four medal categories (vermeil, silver, silver-bronze, and bronze) will be given at the discretion of the jury.

The CCKC activity is held in conjunction with MIDAPHIL '88, the club's 18th annual national stamp show, scheduled for Kansas City's Hyatt Regency Hotel on November 18-20, 1988.

"This continues to be the only competition of its kind", explains Randy Neil, president of the Kansas City group (and WU 30 Councilman. jff). "It is our wish to applaud the efforts of some of our hobby's most unsung helpers: the people who offer their knowledge, usually for no remuneration, in the philatelic and public press."

The competition is divided into five sections:

1. Single article/popular subject;
2. Single article/scholarly subject;
3. Regular column/philatelic medium;
4. Regular column/public medium; and
5. Editing or publishing a philatelic periodical.

Judges for the event will be: Philip Silver, former president of the Collectors Club of New York, and Lowell Newman of the William A. Fox auctions firm.

A special prospectus for the event is available for a business-size SASE sent to: CCKC Journalism Competition, P.O. Box 7088, Shawnee-Mission, KS 66207.

COPO's Lidman Prize to Jeff Stage

The first-ever Lidman Prize for philatelic writing in non-philatelic publications was awarded to Jeff Stage at NAPEX '88 in Washington, DC, on May 29th. Gordon Morison, Assistant Postmaster General, presented the award.

The Lidman competition is sponsored by the Council of Philatelic Organizations, and is intended to encourage writing about stamps in publications read by the general public, thus bringing new collectors to the hobby. Stage, of Liverpool, NY, is a regular columnist

(Continued on page 44.)

(The following instructional material was originally used by Bill Welch at our AMERIPEX seminar. It is reprinted here with his permission.)

Half-Tone Screens

by William L. Welch

A photograph is a "continuous tone" subject. While such a tonal subject cannot be faithfully reproduced by any method other than photography, a representation and appearance of continuous tone can be effected by breaking up the design into minute colored and non-colored areas, of which the relative proportions cause the illusion of varying strengths of tone, and is termed "half-tone".

This breaking up of the design is carried out by exposing a photographic plate to the subject through a cross-line screen, termed a "half-tone screen".

[A 175-line half-tone screen, enlarged about 22 times, has the visual appearance of ordinary screen wire used in windows, except that the 'woven' appearance is not seen due to the nature of screen manufacture.]

The half-tone screen consists of clear glass or film upon which appears a series of closely spaced dark lines crossing one another at right angles. Viewed in a different light, the half-tone screen consists of dark glass or film upon which appear myriads of minute, clear rectangles regularly spaced in vertical and horizontal columns and rows.

Half-tone screens vary in the number of lines to the linear inch, and this number is used to characterize the screen.

The effect of using a half-tone screen is that the design, as it passes through the screen, is broken up into a pattern of dots of different sizes, each clear rectangular space in the screen acting as a sort of subsidiary lens. The photographic emulsion behind each window will be acted upon according to the amount of light passed by that window, and the amount of light is dependent upon the tonal or light value of the corresponding portion of the design. The result is that where much light passes through the windows of the screen, the light spreads and overlaps the lines of the screen, leaving only parts of the photographic emulsion unaffected by light, and resulting in small clear dots spaced comparatively far apart. Where only a very small amount of light passes through the windows of the screen, the effect upon the photographic emulsion is negligible, so that it is unaffected by the light; no, or very little, spread occurs, and the emulsion is further protected by the lines of the screen, so that there are large areas of clear dots spaced close together. Between these extremes, the sizes of the resulting dots will vary according to the amount of light passing through the other windows. This effect is termed "dot formation".

The resulting effect on the photographic emulsion

is that it is either clear or opaque — there is no half-way house — at any particular point, and the whole design is made up of clear or opaque emulsion in small or large areas. There is, in fact, no "tone", but tone is simulated by the varying areas of clear and opaque emulsion.

— From *Fundamentals of Philately*, by L. N. & M. Williams.

The Value of Screened Prints

The use of screened prints enhances illustrations in photocopied publications. When the philatelic journal editor simply places a stamp, cover, or photo directly on the photocopier when "printing" the publication, a great deal of detail is lost. The photocopy appears washed out. Adding a screen helps preserve detail in reproduction. This can be accomplished by shooting a separate screened print or by using one of the new generation of photocopiers that have a built-in screen option.

Commercial printers and/or newspaper plants are a source of screened prints. (They may refer to them by the brand name "Velox".) The cost of such prints is modest, ranging from \$3 to \$7 in most areas.

In addition to improved quality, screening permits the editor to enlarge or reduce illustrations at the same time. This offers editors greater flexibility in layout.

WARNING: When taking stamps or covers to be photographed/screened, you should ask to be present while the work is done. Or, you can put warning labels on the envelope containing the items to be screened. However, as some have learned to their regret, even the sternest of warnings may not keep the photographer/printer from bending stamps or taping covers so that they'll lie flat! Stress to all involved that these items are *valuable*.

The journal of the EFO (Errors, Freaks, and Oddities) Collectors Club is the first one that I have noticed which is using the built-in screen for photocopy reproduction. While it is a coarse screen and one that still doesn't match commercial screening, it is a definite improvement over earlier no-screen photocopying. I'd urge you to consider this option if and when it becomes available in your area. W.L.W.

The Outer Edge — Bob de Violini's 'Spare Time' Task

Our estimable, ubiquitous, doeverythingibus prexy, Bob de Violini, has sent me the June 1988 issue of the Ventura County (CA) Leading Edge Users' Group newsletter, *The Outer Edge*. Bob is VP, Publications for the group and editor of this monthly, computer-typeset, 8½ x 11 looseleaf specialty publication. Drop him a note at address inside front cover page 34 this issue. jff

President's Message

Among the articles in this issue is one from Steve Weston, who recently took on the task of editor for the America Helvetia Philatelic Society. I have seen the result of his efforts, and *Tell* has taken on a very nice professional look in the past year. His methods and suggestions will be of interest to others with access to the necessary equipment.

Most of us who are involved in writing very much now have a computer of some type to help us along that road, and there are some very nice systems that can be acquired for about \$1,000 to \$1,500. But, even though the costs of things like scanners and laser printers continue to decrease, for most, even the low four-figure prices remain beyond the budgets of both our society and ourselves. We need to do the best possible job with the tools that are available to us.

With the increased attention gained by Computer-Aided Publishing (a term that is more correctly descriptive than "desktop publishing"), more people with less experience are putting out a large variety of pieces of paper with little concern for both how well (or poorly) they have written what is on that paper, and how well (or poorly) it looks on that paper.

The need for good writing methods and good English usage continues, and is even greater than before. Unfortunately, there are people who, though sincere in their efforts, are hasty in their preparation, and give their publication a poor image from carelessness in grammar and proofreading. A beautifully laid out and printed publication loses credibility if it is filled with uncorrected spelling errors and bad grammar. This is particularly true if that publication is designed to be a guide for preparing something for print.

Similarly, an outstanding, well-written article can lose readers if the publication it is in is poorly prepared and printed. Though the two often go hand in hand, the language has a greater importance than the printed appearance.

So, let's all pay greater attention to how we write what we write, how it reads and sounds, and, when put into print, to be sure that any sign of carelessness is gone.

Bob de Violini

Some Publications of Interest

by Bob de Violini

A recent book with some very good reviews is *Looking Good in Print, A Guide to Basic Design for Desktop Publishing*. Written by Roger C. Parker, and published by Ventana Press of Chapel Hill, NC. its long subtitle is "How to Produce Attractive, Effective Newsletters, Advertisements, Brochures, Manuals, Correspondence."

And that's what it does, in three sections and twelve chapters in 220 pages. Typical headings of sections and chapters include the building blocks of graphic design, tools of emphasis, tools of organization, developing a format and style, and design makeovers. That last-mentioned chapter shows — on facing pages — many before and after examples of page makeovers. The differences and improvements are dramatic. Well worth the \$23.95 list price.

* * *

Personal Publishing is one of several periodicals concerned with computer-aided publishing. These magazines are always interesting to scan through at a newsstand (if not already subscribed to if you are fully involved in CAP) and purchasing (as I did) an issue with an especially interesting coverage.

The May 1988 issue of *Personal Publishing* provided reviews of optical scanners from 14 different manufacturers, as well as articles discussing how the gray scales used in half-toning affect how we see the resultant image.

And *PC Magazine* has had many articles and special issues in the past year about hardware and software used in the computer publishing world — printers, scanners, and word processing and desktop publishing programs are just a few.

So keep your eyes on the featured stories of these and other similar publications. There may just be the information you're looking for in one of them.

Bob de Violini

Feedback — about PC, 2nd Quarter 1988

Evidently the sermons preached in our previous issue evoked responses from a few of our members, with the result being the following commentaries about various subjects:

* * *

— From Ken Laurence on "Word Order and Word Misuse" by Herman Herst: "Herman Herst, Jr. is quite wrong in his discussion of 'hopefully'. In the first place, virtually all grammarians regard any use of hopefully as a solecism. Of the pop linguists, Edwin Newman says banish it, while William Safire says, we should write, 'It is to be hoped'. I avoid the word myself, but I disagree with their reasoning, since the authorities do not object to the antonym, 'regrettably', and often use it in the same construction. In the example Herst offers, hopefully cannot modify sun, because only adjectives modify nouns, and hopefully is an adverb. Actually, it is a complete adverbial clause which means approximately, 'I hope', in perfectly grammatical, if awkward, English. Also, today's authorities do permit 'feel badly'." (Continued on page 42.)

— From Duane Koenig on “‘A’ Historian or ‘An’ Historian” by BRM: “I always thought a historian was more euphonic than *an* historian; I so acted. When I ran for a dozen years that monthly column of historical anecdotes to 30 newspapers around the world, it was a ‘A Historian’s Notebook.’” Dr. Koenig sent along several samples of this “Notebook” from 1968 issues of *The Caymanian Weekly*, the *Sunday Gazette* (Penang-Malaysia), and the Wellington, NZ *Evening Post*. The last mentioned contained this little squib, which while not very philatelic, is too good to pass by:

“Sewn Into Costume — A hundred years ago Elizabeth of Austria was frequently saluted as the most beautiful woman in Europe. Destined to fall at century’s end in Geneva to an assassin’s stiletto, she rarely appeared in public with her consort, Emperor Francis Joseph. One of the few women of the 1860s who still seems handsome in fading photographs, she possessed a youthful figure, ravishing face and chestnut hair. Every time she rode — she was a superb horsewoman — to assure perfect fit, she was literally sewn by a seamstress into her riding costume.”

— From Chuck Teeman on the newsstand availability of philatelic publications: “I can’t speak to the newsstand at the Pan Am Building, but around here (Rockford, IL) there is nothing of a philatelic nature on the shelf in any of the book store magazine racks. If one did not subscribe to some of the journals it would be impossible to keep up with what is going on in the philatelic world. Now — Great Britain — that’s another story. Almost every newsstand that I was able to browse had a number of good philatelic journals. How to address this problem over here? I’ll let the ‘heavy hitters’ respond to that one!”

— On the same subject from C. S. Kettler: “On a trip to Europe last summer I asked for stamp magazines at a newsstand in the Munich train station, speaking in English. I was promptly offered a choice of three. Isn’t that a contrast to the New York situation?”

— And from Martin Margulis: “I have never been in the Pan Am Building but the newsstands in Grand Central Station have no philatelic material on sale that I could see. As the Pan Am Bldg. is part of the terminal I don’t see why the situation would be much different there. With the increase in the number of the homeless in the 42nd St. area, one does not tarry there any longer than necessary.”

— Continuing with “a” and “an” historian, Everett Erle writes, “I always put my head in the sand and added a word in between — as ‘a truly historical . . .’ So much for rules!” He also gently chides us about the “write

word in the wrong place “ . . . specifically, the line in George Griffenhagen’s report “Closed Albums”: “At least 3 of them are deceased and so we list those above. We also thank the WU members who advised us of their recent passing.” Well, we never said we were perfect!

— From C. S. Kettler, editor of *Philatelia Chimica et Physica*, on “The Editor’s Wish List” (for articles, response, etc.): “The second Quarter, 1988 issue was received today. Your front page editorial hit me where I live. If misery and concern need company, you have mine, for one! I am a very new member of the WU but have been the editor of our journal for the past 4½ years. Our membership is about 225, 50% USA, 20% Canada, and the remainder scattered across 20 overseas countries. I, too, have made many appeals to our membership for articles about our topics. The lack of response is deafening, particularly from the USA members. I have not yet expressed myself as strongly as you have but perhaps it is time to do so. I have instead just become rather cynical about the situation, figuring the American membership (90% or so of them) are exhibiting the national trait of ‘letting George or someone do it’ if they can get away with it. Fortunately, I have a small but faithful stable of regular contributors. Incidentally, many of the faithful are overseas who write good to quite passable English. However, I suspect the faithful few are beginning to run out of ideas or are moving on to other topics. Perhaps we need a philatelic editors’ council to exchange ideas.”

— From Felix Ganz on the same editorial plaint: “Thank you for your personal anger in the title page’s editorial. I agree with you, but what are we going to author which fits exactly into the desired context of the PC? Some of us, as you have seen from my answer and thank you to Bob de Violini (in part reprinted in that very issue) use our not always ample free time to produce specialty articles for other publications and are not therefore necessarily willing or even able to contribute to the much more technical content (writing-wise) of our publication in which more advisory topics are being brought to the attention of all readers. The PC does (and should) address itself to matters of style, writing techniques, reviews, and such, and it seems to me that the number of people in our organization able to write such pieces is quite limited. We other hacks just grind it out on fully philatelic topics!”

— Finally, Martin Margulis also expressed himself on the nature of “research”: “I do not believe there is much research involved in the average philatelic article, including my own. I feel that with more stress on the history in philatelic history, we might get more research

(Continued on page 44.)

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

(As of July 22, 1988)

Welcome

First we wish to repeat a welcome to the following two new members of WU 30 whose listing in the Second Quarter 1988 issue of *The Philatelic Communicator* was garbled by the dropping of a couple of lines.* They are:

1485 Richard H. Salz, 60-27th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94121, Co-author, *Canal Zone Stamps* and contributor to the *Canal Zone Philatelist*. Sponsor: Everett Erle.

1486 Charles Ray Waller, P.O. Box 272, Hayward, CA 94543. Editor, *Council Courier* (Council of Northern California Philatelic Societies). Sponsor: Robert de Violini.

* (The error in omitting part of the copy of both these new members' "welcome" reports was entirely mine in typography and failure to catch it in proofreading. The Sec.-Treas.' copy was correct. Joe Frye)

We also welcome the following new members who have joined WU 30 since our last report:

1488 Edwin S. Hodge, 3133 Glendale Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15227-2020. Co-author *Handbook of Chemistry on Stamps* (ATA Chemistry and Physics on Stamps Study Unit). Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.

1489 Peter D. Martin, 7657 Southern Oak Drive, Springfield, VA 22153. Columnist, *Columbia News* (Augusta, GA): working on a series of publications covering Playing Card Revenues. Sponsor: George Griffenhagen.

1490 Robert Walter Everett, Jr., 6611 General Diaz, New Orleans, LA 70124-3201. Free-lance writer for *Linn's Stamp News*, *Stamp Collector*, and *First Days*. Sponsor: John Hotchner.

Back Issues of *The Philatelic Communicator*.

Back issues of *The Philatelic Communicator*, formerly known as the *News Bulletin*, for 1984, 1985, 1986, and 1987 are still available at \$2.50 per issue postpaid, or \$10.00 per year. If interested in obtaining any or all these back issues, send your check, payable to "APS Writers Unit 30", to Secretary-Treasurer Griffenhagen.

Help Us Keep Your Mailing Address Current

This past few months, your Secretary has received an unusually large number of notices from the USPS advising that certain

Unit members have changed their mailing address. Each notice costs 30¢ and even then we have no assurance that these members actually received their issue of this journal.

We still have Unit members who think that by advising APS and/or APRL of their address change, Writers Unit 30 is also advised of such changes. This is NOT the case. All members are urged to send address changes — as soon as they are known — with effective date to the Writers Unit 30 Secretary-Treasurer. This is the best way to save Unit funds, and to assure that each member receives each issue of our journal promptly.

George Griffenhagen
WU 30 Secretary-Treasurer
2501 Drexel Street
Vienna, VA 22180.

STaMpsHOW Writers Breakfast — Interaction and Innovation Promised

On Sunday morning, August 28, 1988, at 8:30 a.m., the Writers Breakfast for STaMpsHOW 88 will begin with several new features, including:

- Presentation of all five levels of medals to the winners in the STaMpsHOW 88 literature competition, and first-time announcement of their identities;
- Name tags will be provided for all Writers Unit 30 members present, to give everyone an opportunity to meet one another. Seating will be informally arranged to assure that as many "writers" and "readers" as possible are seated together.

Admission is limited, and requires immediate advance reservation and check for \$12.50, payable STaMpsHOW 88, per person, be sent to:

Dan Asmus — C/o APS
Box 8000
State College, PA 16803.

His telephone number is (814) 237-3803 (the APS switchboard number) if phone contact is needed.

— The gathering will be welcomed by Writers Unit 30 President Robert de Violini of Oxnard, CA. Barbara Mueller, Jefferson, WI, editor of this journal, will preside over the distribution of over a dozen interesting and worthwhile door prizes: anyone attending the breakfast is eligible to win.

— A number of special guests will be introduced, and some innovative presentations dealing with the hobby of stamp collecting will be made.

Send your reservation and check today and enjoy this always-popular event.

TO:

COPO's Lidman Prize to Jeff Stage (Continued from page 39.)

on stamp subjects for the *Star Magazine* supplement of the *Syracuse (New York) Herald American*.

The Lidman Prize is named in honor of David Lidman, stamp columnist for the *New York Times* from 1960 to 1973, and also the author of three philatelic books. Mr. Lidman died in 1982.

Several dozen writers submitted entries in the 1987 contest, including regular newspaper columns, encyclopedia articles, and special-interest magazine articles.

Entry forms, contest rules, and judging criteria for the 1988 Lidman Prize competition are available from COPO, Box COPO, State College, PA 16803-8340. COPO is a non-profit organization comprising more than 400 stamp clubs, dealers, and other entities, that promotes the hobby of stamp collecting to the general public.

(The above is an unedited reprint of the COPO press release. The thought occurs: Would not the Lidman Prize be more meaningful to aspiring philatelic journalists if a selection of the winner's columns were made available to publications such as ours? Then we could learn by example what made Jeff Stage's work so outstanding. As presently conducted, this competition does little to improve the "breed".)

Feedback . . . (Continued from page 42.)

However, if what is wanted, as I have been advised, is short articles, why bother? After all, why bother for a 3 to 5-page article which has illustrations? I wrote, many years ago, about this to the then editor of the *Congress Book*. He agreed. Most articles are copied (abstracted) from other articles or books on the subject."

Remember WU 30 if your address is about to change! See page 43.

That Profound Silence is Still Being Quiet

by Joe F. Frye

Several years ago our esteemed and talented member Dr. Felix D. Bertalanffy of Winnipeg, Manitoba, contributed what perhaps was the most reacted-to article ever to appear in either the *News Bulletin* or *The Philatelic Communicator*. It decried "That Profound Silence", which almost always greets the publication of many literary efforts of a scholarly or — as in our case — somewhat special-interest nature.

Those nitpickii will respond with verve and glee. A few of the thoughtful will submit corrective data in more substantial cases where correction cries for same. The vast majority — and sometimes all — will be silent.

While I was editor of this journal under its former name I discovered quickly that responses came in at once when:

- I used the wrong case, tense, or the like;
- Something was wrong with the production or distribution of the journal, or;
- My fill-in efforts (to complete an edition without leaving part of a page blank due to lack of input from the membership!) touched a nerve or were more painfully amateurish or personal than usual.

One of the longest letters to the editor I recall having received dealt with the stern admonition that I should not use these pages to promote (?) my personal views that firearms are not evil and should not be banished to outer space (my NRA Life membership dates to 1948).

Time doesn't permit looking up the Bertalanffy masterwork but will try to dig it up for next issue to quote volume, number, etc. for you. Respond!
